

**City of Reading City Council  
Regular Business Meeting  
Monday, February 25, 2013**

Council President Francis G. Acosta called the meeting to order.

Reverend McDuffie from the Bethel AME Church gave the invocation.

All present pledged to the flag.

**ATTENDANCE**

Council President Acosta  
Councilor Corcoran, District 1  
Councilor Sterner, District 3  
Councilor Marmarou, District 4  
Councilor Reed, District 5  
City Auditor D. Cituk  
City Solicitor C. Younger  
Managing Director C. Snyder  
City Clerk L. Kelleher  
Mayor V. Spencer

**PROCLAMATIONS AND PRESENTATIONS**

City Council issued the following:

- Council Commendation recognizing “Bud” Haines
- Council Commendation recognizing Afro Latino Magazine
- Council Commendation posthumously recognizing Frank Gilyard, accepted by the Gilyard family

Deb Luigard, representing Senator Judy Schwank, issued a letter and State Citation to the Gilyard family.

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

Council President Acosta announced that five citizens were registered to address Council on non-agenda matters. He inquired if any Councilor objected to suspending the rule requiring non-agenda comment at the end of the meeting. As no one objected the rule requiring non-agenda comment at the end of the meeting was suspended. Council President Acosta reminded the citizens registered to speak about the remaining public speaking rules.

**Dave Opperman, of Opperman Lane, Birdsboro,** was not present.

**Michaeline Pauley, of North 9<sup>th</sup> St.,** stated that she owns a non-owner occupied property in Reading that has not operated as a rental property since the 1980s when her niece moved into the property. She stated that after her niece died she allowed her niece's daughter to move in and live rent free. She stated that her property recently was placarded as an illegal rental. She stated that she discussed the \$1000 fine with a Property Maintenance Supervisor who explained that "niece" does not fall under the definition of family in the housing ordinance therefore the fine stands. She requested assistance in eliminating this fine.

**Randy Gaston, of Grand Valley Rd.,** stated that he is representing Egleman's Park Association, which has been in a partnership with the City since 1991, memorialized in a 25 year lease agreement executed by former Mayor Haggerty. He stated that the agreement does not expire until 2018. He explained that the Association was formed as a non profit organization to permit fundraising. He provided a history of the donations, private and public, and the capital improvements to this City owned park.

**Dan Clouser, of Mountain Top Road,** noted the importance of the programs run by the Egelman's Park Association and their benefit to City youth. He asked Council to consider the impact ending this lease agreement would have on City youth.

**Randy Strausser, of Acacia Avenue,** described his personal experience participating in the programs offered by the Egleman's Park Association. He suggested that rather than terminate this lease agreement, the City should seek out other volunteer organizations to provide programming and make improvements to other City parks and fields.

## **APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA & MINUTES**

Council President Acosta called Council's attention to the minutes for the February 11<sup>th</sup> Regular Meeting of Council and the agenda for this meeting. He noted the need to amend tonight's agenda by adding an ordinance for introduction that will authorize the transfer of \$1,000,000 from the General Fund to the Recycling Fund.

**Councilor Reed moved, seconded by Councilor Marmarou, to approve the minutes from the February 11<sup>th</sup> Regular Meeting and the agenda, as amended, for this meeting. The motion was approved unanimously.**

## **Consent Agenda**

There was no legislation on the Consent Agenda.

## **ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT**

Mayor Spencer read his report, summarized below. The report was not provided to Council in written form.

- Described the work of the Mayor's Office staff
- Noted the preparation of a waste to energy RFP, based on the presentation made by DTE
- Noted the preparation of a downtown parking plan with the Parking Authority and DID.
- Announced that RAWA will begin Trash and Recycling billing on April 1<sup>st</sup>
- Announced a community meeting in the 15<sup>th</sup> Ward, arranged for Thursday, February 28<sup>th</sup>.
- Described his activities over the past two weeks

Councilor Reed asked the Solicitor if the Trash and Recycling billing can move to RAWA without Council approval when Council approval was required to move property tax collection to the County Treasurer and earned income tax to Berks EIT. The Solicitor requested that Councilor Reed issue her questions in writing as he is not prepared to respond at the meeting.

Council President Acosta asked that the Trash and Recycling billing issue be further discussed on March 4<sup>th</sup> as a Committee of the Whole topic.

Councilor Reed also questioned the timing of the community meeting in the 15<sup>th</sup> Ward, as she had asked the Mayor's staff to avoid the period of time when she would be unavailable.

## **AUDITOR'S REPORT**

City Auditor Cituk read the report distributed to Council. In summary:

- 2013 Real Estate Transfer Tax collection, including the recent sale of two multi-million dollar properties.
- 2013 Admissions Tax collection

## **REPORT FROM DEPT. DIRECTORS, BOARDS, AUTHORITIES, & COMMISSIONS**

None.

## **ORDINANCES FOR FINAL PASSAGE**

**A. Bill No. 9 – 2013** - amending the 2013 Position Ordinance by adding 30 firefighter positions, to comply with the SAFER Grant if it is accepted. **(Man Dir/Council Staff)**

*Introduced at the January 28 regular meeting; Tabled at the February 11 regular meeting*

**Councilor Reed moved, seconded by Councilor Marmarou, to table Bill No 9-2013.**

**Bill No. 9-2013 was tabled by the following vote:**

**Yeas: – Corcoran, Marmarou, Reed, Sterner, Acosta, President - 5**

**Nays: None -0**

**B. Bill No. 10-2013** - amending the CORE Guidelines to provide the option for a CORE property to be marketed and sold as an owner occupied rental (**Law**) *Introduced at the February 11 regular meeting*

**Councilor Corcoran moved, seconded by Councilor Reed, to enact Bill No 10-2013.**

**Yeas: – Corcoran, Marmarou, Reed, Sterner, Acosta, President - 5**

**Nays: None -0**

**C. Bill No. 11-2013** - amending the Codified Ordinances, Chapter 1 Administrative Code, §1-122. Ordinances (**Council**) *Introduced at the February 11 regular meeting*

**Councilor Reed moved, seconded by Councilor Corcoran, to enact Bill No 11-2013.**

**Yeas: – Corcoran, Marmarou, Reed, Sterner, Acosta, President - 5**

**Nays: None -0**

## **INTRODUCTION OF NEW ORDINANCES**

Council President Acosta read the following ordinances into the record:

**A. Ordinance** - amending Chapter 7-207, Fire Prevention and Fire Protection, and amending Section 901.6.2 to require all records of system inspections, tests and maintenance under Section 901 of the City of Reading Fire Prevention and Protection Code to be provided to Brycer, LLC, for the electronic record management and retrieval by the Office of the Fire Marshal (**Law**)

**B. Ordinance** – authorizing the Mayor to execute any and all documents, including but not limited to promissory notes and security agreements, to obtain certain radios, etc., in cooperation with the County of Berks and the participation in the County-wide public safety radio system (**Law**)

**C. Ordinance** – authorizing a referendum question regarding a dedicated Library Tax on the May 21<sup>st</sup> primary ballot (**Council**)

**D. Ordinance** – authorizing a second transfer of \$1,000,000 from the General Fund to the Trash and Recycling Fund. (Adm Services)

## **RESOLUTIONS**

None.

## **COUNCIL COMMENT**

Councilor Corcoran congratulated those honored with commendations at tonight's meeting. He noted the life-long commitment and dedication of Frank Gilyard and the need to live each moment to the fullest.

Councilor Corcoran requested that the Mayor's Office operate with more transparency and begin to operate his office in the same way as he requested past Mayor's to operate when he served as Council President.

Mayor Spencer took exception with Councilor Corcoran's statement and noted that his staff negotiated with RAWA regarding the transfer of the Trash and Recycling billing. He expressed the belief that the transfer of this billing was an administrative decision in which Council has no approval role.

Councilor Marmarou agreed with the remarks Councilor Corcoran made about Mr. Gilyard.

Councilor Reed noted the legacy left by Frank Gilyard.

Councilor Sterner noted the importance of community spirit and volunteerism.

Council President Acosta described how he came to know Mr. Gilyard and noted Mr. Gilyard's beautiful leadership style and his dedication to history.

**Councilor Marmarou moved, seconded by Councilor Reed, to adjourn the regular meeting of Council.**

*Respectfully submitted by Linda A. Kelleher CMC, City Clerk*